

Weiss, H. B.

1920. State of N. J., Dept. of Agriculture, Circular No. XXXI, p. 9 (Notes on Food Habits of *Brachys*).

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

Lathridiidæ in the heart of New York City (Coleop.).—Many species of the beetles of this family have been found to be cosmopolitan, and the following incident would lend plausibility to the assumption that not only are they generally widely scattered, but much more abundant than the scant material in collections would lead one to suspect. During the past summer, while I was away in the country, a leak in the plumbing in my city house soaked the wall against which stood a large number of beetle boxes. Upon examining the latter after discovering the condition of the wall, I was aghast at the mass of mould, white, green and yellow, which completely covered the specimens and a great part of the lining of the boxes. Their contents seemed irretrievably lost; but I determined to do what I might to save something from the wreck. In this, by the way, I was highly successful, succeeding in removing the mould and cleaning the specimens with a camel's-hair brush and a solution of carbolic acid. But while engaged in this work I found between one and two hundred live specimens of Lathridiidæ, evidently attracted to the boxes by their moist, mouldy condition. Four species were represented, all of them originally described from specimens taken in localities far removed from our shores, and so far as known by no means common in this country. The question presents itself: How then did they find those mouldy boxes in a "brown-stone front" of a New York City block? If not indigenous (though their original discovery elsewhere does not necessarily preclude such a possibility), commerce is of course responsible for their introduction here. But whatever their origin, it would seem by no means improbable that they may be present almost anywhere that offers conditions favorable for their sustenance and reproduction, and that dusty crevices in our city houses (between floor boards, etc.) may have their Lathridiid content wholly unsuspected by us, even though we regard ourselves as observant coleopterists; and owing to their

extremely small size and secretive habits only an accident, as in my experience, might bring them to our attention. As it happens, none of the several species taken by me under the above conditions has heretofore been recorded from New York. They are as follows: *Adistemia watsoni* Woll., originally described from Funchal in the island of Madeira. Also taken in the Canaries, Algeria, Cape of Good Hope, Venezuela and Chili, and in this country recorded from Washington, D. C. This species in numbers far exceeded the others found in the mouldy boxes. *Cartodere costulata* Reitt., taken in Japan and Germany, and in this country recorded from Mass., Penna. and Mich. *Cartodere elegans* Aubé. From the Mediterranean region, and in this country recorded from Washington, D. C., only. *Corticaria fulva* Com. Cosmopolitan, recorded here from Mass., Va., Ky., Mich. and Lower California. For the foregoing records I am indebted to Mr. H. C. Fall's review of the family published in *Trans. Am. Ent. Soc.*, XXVI, pp. 101-190. Apparently the beetles in question subsisted entirely on the mould, as no evidence whatever was discovered of any consumption of the mounted beetles in the invaded boxes.—LEWIS B. WOODRUFF.

BOOK REVIEWS.

LES INSECTES. ANATOMIE ET PHYSIOLOGIE GÉNÉRALES. INTRODUCTION À L'ÉTUDE DE L'ENTOMOLOGIE BIOLOGIQUE. BY C. HOULBERT. Second, revised edition. One volume superroyal 18mo, 380 pp., with 207 text figures. Librairie Octave Doin, Paris, 1920. Price: francs 8.00, unbound; francs 10.00, cloth bound.

This handy little volume is part of an "Encyclopedia of Science" published under the direction of Dr. Toulouse and covering all branches of human knowledge. It contains a general account of the structure and habits of insects. Intended as an introduction to the study of entomology, it admirably serves its purpose. After a short definition of the class Insecta, the reader plunges at once into a fascinating history of entomology. Perhaps this part of the book will be most popular with the advanced entomologist because it contains so many little-known details of the life and work of the early French entomologists. It is rather curious that the author does not point with pride to the Entomological Society of France as the senior scientific body exclusively devoting its activities to the study of insects. Its first meeting was held